

**HUD Community Compass Technical Assistance and Capacity Building NOFA**  
**Funding Opportunity No.: FR-5800-N-12**  
**Frequently Asked Questions**  
**June 30, 2014**

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The FAQs below are organized by the section of the NOFA to which the question is most applicable. This FAQ document replaces the June 2, 2014 Community Compass NOFA FAQs and identifies newly added questions as “**New!**” Please submit additional questions to [communitycompass@hud.gov](mailto:communitycompass@hud.gov) no later than July 18, 2014. Questions submitted after July 18, 2014 may not receive a response before the application deadline.

**Section I. Funding Opportunity Description**

**Q.1. What is HUD Community Compass?**

A.1. Community Compass is HUD’s integrated approach to technical assistance and capacity building activities. It builds on OneCPD from prior years, and OneCPD Plus from FY13. OneCPD pioneered a comprehensive, demand-response, flexible model for delivering technical assistance to HUD customers. Community Compass builds on that concept, expanding it to program areas at HUD beyond CPD. The name Community Compass comes from the idea that the goal of HUD’s technical assistance and capacity-building is to help customers navigate challenges associated with HUD funding and programs and points them in the right direction to best serve their communities.

**Q.2. Our experience does not cover all of the eligible activities and Community Compass objectives described. Does that mean we shouldn’t apply?**

A.2. No, HUD is seeking both applicants that have a broad range of expertise and experience, and those that have deep expertise and experience in just a few areas. Successful applicants will have experience in at least two of the eligible activities described in Section I.A. of the NOFA. For example, a successful applicant may only have experience working with Native American Tribes and the Indian Housing Block Grant, and not with other programs, but has experience in two of the following eligible activities: direct TA and NAHASDA formula allocation and administration. On the other hand, applicants with experience in many HUD program areas, but who only have experience with one of the eligible activities, would not be successful. HUD may look at the range of expertise and experience that a successful applicant has when determining award amounts.

**Q.3. Are applicants allowed to specify which program(s) or topic area(s) the organization wants to conduct work in?**

A.3. No, applicants may not specify programs or topics. However, applicants may target their application by the type of experience they describe in response to Rating Factor 1 and the Community Compass objectives they elect to address in their response to Rating Factor 2.

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**Q.4. In Eligible Activities, what does HUD mean by negotiated rulemaking? What is the IHBG formula?**

- A.4. Negotiated rulemaking is a process defined by the Negotiated Rulemaking Act of 1996 (P.L. 104-320). Representatives from federal agencies, such as HUD, and affected interest groups, in this case, American Indian and Alaska Native tribal governments, meet to negotiate the terms of proposed administrative rules. Sessions are called to address particular subjects and usually consist of several meetings of the committee. The Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act requires HUD to conduct negotiated rulemaking sessions in certain circumstances, such as, when amendments require the establishment of new regulations.

The IHBG formula is a calculation that determines the amount of each recipient's grant for that fiscal year. The formula is very complex and contains many variables (such as, population, income levels, housing costs), and weighted factors.

**New!**

**Q.5. Will HUD please explain the difference between Community Compass Objective C and Objective D in Section I.A.2. (page 5) of the NOFA? .**

- A.5. Objective C may focus on improving one or more of the specified deficiencies (financial, management, physical and governance) to address root cause issues and build capacity for long-term improved performance of public and tribal housing agencies and tribally designated housing entities, state and local units of government, and nonprofit customers. Objective D is a more comprehensive approach to determine the source of the PHA issues (deficiencies and drivers of poor performance may not be known at the start) and create a plan to ensure the PHA's operations and finances become viable overall. They are related objectives but may require a slightly different TA approach.

**Q.6. How many of the Community Compass objectives are we required to address in the TA Plan in Rating Factor 2?**

- A.6. Rating Factor 2 requires that at an applicant's TA Plan address at least three or more of the Community Compass objectives described in Section I, page 5 of the NOFA.

**Section II. Award Information**

**New!**

**Q.7. Is the project period 12 months or 36 months and how is the award amount disbursed over the project period?**

- A.7. The period of performance for Community Compass TA cooperative agreements is 36 months from the effective date of the award and the award amount is disbursed monthly as reimbursement for work accomplished under approved work plans.

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**New!**

**Q.8. For the past 2 years, ONAP has had its own NOFA. Will there be a subsequent ONAP-specific TA NOFA released later this year?**

A.8. No, there will not be a subsequent ONAP-specific TA NOFA this year. ONAP is partnering with other HUD offices in releasing this NOFA and will make all awards for this year through the Community Compass TA NOFA.

**Q.9. What is NAHASDA and who is eligible to apply for NAHASDA TA funds?**

A.9. NAHASDA stands for the Native American Housing and Self-Determination Act and is the source of funding for the Indian Housing Block Grant. A minimum of \$3 million of the NAHASDA TA funds must be awarded to national or regional organizations representing Native American housing interests. A minimum of \$300,000 of NAHASDA TA funds must be awarded for training and technical assistance for the Native Hawaiian Housing Block Grant recipient and its subrecipients.

**Section IV. Application and Submission Information**

**New!**

**Q.10. Is there a standard format in Excel for listing the subcontractors and consultants? Is there a maximum size/length for that list?**

A.10. There is no standard format for providing subcontractor's and/or consultant's information and there is no maximum size or length for the appendix. The appendix does not count toward the application 50- page limit, as stated in Section IV.B. of the NOFA.

**New!**

**Q.11. The NOFA requires that applicants have an agreement in place with consultants/subcontractors they will include in their applications. What is required?**

A.11. Any type of written acknowledgement where the subcontractor (or consultant) and the applicant have both agreed that the subcontractor will be part of the application and participate in TA work if the applicant is awarded funds would be acceptable. A letter from the subcontractor or consultant and written acknowledgement from the applicant would suffice.

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**Q.12. Can an organization apply as an applicant and be listed as a subcontractor under another organization's application?**

A.12. No, an organization must decide whether to apply as an applicant or be included as a subcontractor on another organization's application. However, unsuccessful applicants may subsequently subcontract with one or more awarded organizations (subject to procurement policies).

**Q.13. Is an organization allowed to be listed as a subcontractor on more than one application?**

Q.13. Yes, an organization may be listed as a subcontractor on multiple applications, if they have an existing agreement with each applicant prior to application submission.

**Q.14. If we don't have staff that are HOME Certified Specialists, can they take the Regulations Training exam after we are awarded a grant?**

A.14. Yes, staff, subcontractors, and consultants may take the exam after funds are awarded. However, HUD will not be able to assign or task any HOME-related technical assistance until one or more staff, subcontractors or consultants under the awardee obtain HOME Program Specialist status with the requisite exam score.

*New!*

**Q.15. The NOFA states that a one-page summary is required but does not specify what information is required. Can you please advise what information HUD requires?**

A.15. The information required in the one-page summary is detailed on page 14 of the NOFA in the application checklist. The summary must indicate whether or not the applicant organization is designated as a disadvantaged business, small business, or a national or regional organization representing Native American housing interests); and a funding request amount in whole dollars.

**Q.16. Section V.A. indicates that HUD will consider the degree to which the narrative is clear, concise, well organized, and proofread. Is there a specific format we should use to organize the application?**

A.16. There is no prescribed format for the application but it is recommended that applicants clearly identify the headers for each of the criteria and sub-criteria of Rating Factors 1, 2, and 3.

**Q.17. Is the page limit (50 pages) for each Rating Factor, or for all of the Rating Factors?**

A.17. The page limit is for the entire application, exclusive of the one-page application summary and the appendix. An applicant's response to Rating Factors 1, 2, and 3 must not exceed 50 pages.

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**Section V.A., Rating Factor 1: Capacity of the Applicant and Relevant Experience**

**New!**

**Q.18. Does “Capacity of the Applicant and Relevant Experience” require applicants to describe *all* their relevant experience and capacity since the applicant was founded, or over any other specific timeframe?**

A.18. HUD does not specify the timeframe for an applicant’s relevant experience and capacity; however, the applicant should describe their experience and capacity fully to demonstrate their capacity to perform Community Compass eligible activities described in this NOFA in Section I.

**New!**

**Q.19. Is it possible to receive the maximum points if an applicant only describes experience and expertise under two of the eligible activities and not all seven eligible activities?**

A.19. As stated in the NOFA, applicants are required to respond to at least two of the activities and applications are scored on the relevance of their experience for the activities selected. Applicants responding to at least two activities may receive maximum points if their response demonstrates their expertise and capacity to perform the activities selected.

**Q.20. Last year’s NOFA asked for the names and qualifications of key personnel in Rating Factor 1. Are we supposed to include the names and qualifications of individual staff in response to the questions under Rating Factor 1 in this NOFA?**

A.20. For Rating Factor 1A, applicants should describe their experience in relationship to at least two of the NOFA’s eligible activities and should address the specific bullet points included under each activity. This may or may not include a description of an individual team member’s experience or expertise. However, applicants should not simply list the names and qualifications for individual staff members in response to Factor 1A. For Factor 1B, applicants should list the names of the key staff responsible for managing and complying with the award requirements.

**Q.21. Our team is only experienced in one of the seven eligible activities. Are we required to describe our experience for at least two of the activities?**

A.21. Yes, HUD is seeking applicants that have experience in at least two of the eligible activities. The nature of the work that is expected to be assigned under this NOFA requires that successful applicants be qualified to do more than one of the eligible activities listed.

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**Q.22. What if we have experience in more than two of the eligible activities but are concerned about exceeding the page limit if we describe our experience for more than two of them?**

A.22. HUD recommends including your team's experience for as many of the eligible activities with which you have experience and expertise. The page limit is intended to accommodate applicants that have experience in two or more of the eligible activities.

**Q.23. Will our application be rated a lower score if our only focus is on NAHASDA TA?**

A.23. No, applications are not rated lower if focused only on NAHASDA. However, successful applicants for any program or policy area must be experienced in providing at least two of the eligible activities described in the NOFA.

**Q.24. I have experience working directly with Native American Tribes and Public Housing Agencies. Which eligible activity would my experience fall under?**

A.24. This depends on the type of work your team has performed for the Native American Tribes and Public Housing Agencies. To understand the type of work that would fall under each of the eligible activities, please refer to the description of the activities in Section I. A. 1. Community Compass Eligible Activities. Specific questions may be directed to [communitycompass@hud.gov](mailto:communitycompass@hud.gov).

**New!**

**Q.25. Does Rating Factor 1 require applicants to describe the relevant experience of their complete proposed TA team, including subcontractors and/or consultants with an agreement to participate in an award under the NOFA, or only the direct experience of the applicant agency itself?**

A.25. For Rating Factor 1, applicants should describe the experience of their proposed TA team. HUD's use of the term "team" means subcontractors and consultants with whom the applicant has agreements. This may or may not include a description of every individual team member's experience or expertise; however, applicants should not simply list the names and qualifications for individual staff members in response to Factor IA.

**Section V.A., Rating Factor 2: Soundness of Approach**

**New!**

**Q.26. Is it possible for applicants to receive the maximum points if their TA Plan only addresses three (or any number less than 15) of the Community Compass objectives, or will a maximum score require that all 15 objectives be addressed within the proposed TA Plan?**

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A.26. Rating Factor 2 requires that an applicant's TA Plan address at least three of the Community Compass objectives described in Section I, page 5 of the NOFA. Applicants that respond to only three objectives may receive the maximum points. The number of objectives beyond the three that are required will not affect the applicant's ability to receive the maximum score. The score is based on the likely effectiveness of the TA plan in achieving the objectives the applicant selects to address, as well as the description of each of the required elements in the TA plan (e.g., specific tasks, rationale, key personnel, etc.)

**New!**

**Q.27. Are we required to include three objectives each for the city, county and Native American tribe in our TA plan or are the number of objectives addressed counted for the plan as a whole?**

A.27. Applicants are required to select at least three (3) Community Compass objectives to address in their TA plan, not three objectives each for the City, County, and Native American tribe. Applicants may choose to focus their TA plan and objectives only on the Native American tribe, or only on the City, or on the City and County, etc. However, for some of the objectives, an effective TA plan may require a comprehensive or coordinated approach among the different entities (City, County, Native American tribe).

**New!**

**Q.28. Are we required to develop a TA Plan that addresses all of the issues in all three areas of the Community Profile (Underwood City, the County, and the Tribe) or can we only address the issues in one of the three areas of the Community Profile?**

A.28. No, applicants are not required to develop a TA plan that addresses all of the issues in all three areas of the Community Profile. Applicants should address the issues relevant to the objectives they have selected to address in their TA plan.

**Revised!**

**Q.29 Should the total amount of funds we request in the one-page summary be the same as the total budget for the TA plan in Rating Factor 2?**

A.29. No. The detailed budget (SF-424CBW) should match the TA plan prepared under Factor 2, Soundness of Approach. The SF-424CBW provides more detail for the costs associated with the proposed TA included in the TA Plan. In contrast, the total amount requested covers the three-year budget period and is provided as part of the one-page summary. The total amount requested should be based on: 1) the number of available personnel and the range and quality of their skills and knowledge; and 2) the ability of the applicant to manage these resources to successfully execute multiple TA engagements, develop products, and/or conduct group learning sessions simultaneously over a three-year period.

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**Q.30. Are Underwood City, Porter County, and the Porter Native American Tribe based on a real place?**

A.30. No, the Community Profile is a hypothetical place and was created using examples of the types of challenges that HUD's customers have or may encounter when they deliver housing and community development services and programs.

**Q.31. Rating Factor 2 asks for a TA Plan based on a Community Profile that includes a city, county, and Native American Tribe. Should the TA Plan include TA for all three of these (the city, county, and Native American Tribe), or just one?**

A.31. To some extent, this depends on which of the Community Compass objectives an applicant elects to use in its TA plan. Some of the objectives may only be relevant to the City and County, some only to the County and Native American Tribe, and others may be relevant to all three. However, the NOFA presents the community profile as a single community and as such, TA would need to consider the city, county, and tribe to effectively address some of the Community Compass objectives.

**Q.32 Is this the same as last year's NOFA, where applicants chose one scenario to respond to?**

A.32. No, applicants do not respond to one scenario like last year's NOFA. This year's NOFA has just one Community Profile. Applicants may respond to different parts of the profile depending on which of the Community Compass objectives they elect to address in their response to Rating Factor 2 (e.g., the TA plan).

**Q.33. How do we determine what the period of performance should be for the TA Plan in Rating Factor 2?**

A.33. The period of performance should not exceed the maximum period of performance for the cooperative agreement, which is three years. Applicants should provide a period of performance that is commensurate with the proposed work.

**Q.34. How do I prepare a budget for the TA Plan without knowing all of the information about the community, such as, its location? How would I account for travel costs if a trip were necessary?**

A.34. Applicants should assume the community is located in the continental United States and may assume that air travel and ground transportation are required in addition to lodging and meals.

**Q.35. How will HUD evaluate the budget in Rating Factor 2?**

A.35. HUD will consider the appropriateness of the costs relative to the TA Plan as well as the overall reasonableness of the rates and travel costs.



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**Q.36. The description of the Porter Native American Tribe mentions FCAS. What is FCAS?**

A.36. FCAS stands for Formula Current Assisted Stock. These are homes that were developed or operated under HUD's former Indian housing programs, including programs authorized by the United States Housing Act of 1937. A portion of the IHBG is based on the amount of FCAS a tribe owns or operates.

**VI. Award Administration Information**

**Q.37. Are we required to use a 12-point font or can we use a smaller font? Are we required to use any particular type of font?**

A.37. A minimum 12-point font is required for the narrative for Rating Factors 1, 2, and 3. Applications submitted in smaller font are rated lower. However, the list of subcontractor and consultant qualifications can be in a smaller font.

**Q.38. If we do not know the work that HUD will assign, on what basis should we propose a requested amount?**

A.38. The amount requested should be based on the number of available personnel, the range and quality of their skills and knowledge, and the ability of the applicant to manage these resources to successfully execute multiple TA or capacity-building engagements involving several covered programs simultaneously over a three-year period.

**Section V. Application Review Information**

**New!**

**Q.39. Page 25 of the NOFA, Section V.A.2. NOFA Priorities, provides a heading with no description; is this a criterion that applicants need to address?**

A.39. The NOFA Priorities, as identified in the General Section, are not applicable to the Community Compass NOFA.

**New!**

**Q.40. The General Section of the Department's FY2014 NOFA for Discretionary Programs indicates that two bonus points may be awarded for specified activities, whereas the Community Compass NOFA indicates that there are no bonus points. Please clarify.**

A.40. The information in the 2014 Community Compass NOFA is correct. The bonus points described in the General Section do not apply to the 2014 Community Compass NOFA.

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**Community Compass Resources:**

The first two webinars for the Community Compass NOFA have been posted. The first webinar provides an overview, NOFA highlights, application tips, and significant changes between the FY2013 OneCPD+ TA NOFA and the FY2014 Community Compass TA NOFA. That webinar is available here: [FY2014 Community Compass TA NOFA Webinar – June 2, 2014](#). The second webinar focusing on NAHASDA and PHA Receivership is available here: [FY2014 Community Compass TA NOFA Webinar - June 4, 2014](#).